

## **Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 24**

### **RESOLUTION CHAPTER 65**

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 24—Relative to Valley Fever Awareness Month.

[Filed with Secretary of State July 6, 2009.]

#### **LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST**

SCR 24, Ashburn. Valley Fever Awareness Month.

This measure would proclaim August 2009 as Valley Fever Awareness Month.

WHEREAS, Valley fever (coccidioidomycosis), a progressive, multisymptom, respiratory disorder, is a debilitating disease; and

WHEREAS, It is caused by the inhalation of tiny airborne fungi that live in soil, but are released into the air by soil disturbance or wind; and

WHEREAS, Valley fever attacks the respiratory system, causing infection that can lead to symptoms that resemble a cold, influenza, or pneumonia redundant; and

WHEREAS, Left untreated or mistreated, infection can spread from the lungs into the bloodstream, causing inflammation to the skin, permanent damage to lung and bone tissue, and swelling of the membrane surrounding the brain, leading to meningitis, which can be devastating and even fatal; and

WHEREAS, Once serious symptoms of valley fever appear, including pneumonia and labored breathing, treatment must be prompt with antifungal drugs that are disagreeable and often toxic, especially for patients who have them injected beneath the base of their skulls for meningitis, causing side effects such as nausea, fever, and kidney damage; and

WHEREAS, Within California alone, valley fever is found in portions of the Sacramento Valley, all of the San Joaquin Valley, desert regions, and portions of southern California; and

WHEREAS, In the last 10 years, infection rates in California and Arizona have risen 400 percent, from an estimated 1,600 cases in 1996 to over 8,000 cases in 2006; and

WHEREAS, Central valley prison inmates are being infected by valley fever at epidemic levels, contributing significantly to the state's prison health care costs; and

WHEREAS, Valley fever kills between 100 and 200 more Americans every year than tuberculosis; and

WHEREAS, Valley fever most seriously affects the young, the elderly, those with lowered immune systems, and those of African American and Filipino descent; and

WHEREAS, Valley fever has been a disease studied for the past 100 years, but still remains impossible to control and difficult to treat; and

WHEREAS, There is no known cure to date for valley fever; however, researchers are closer than they ever have been to finding a much needed vaccine to cure this devastating disease; and

WHEREAS, The research effort to find a vaccine and a funding partnership, including funding from the State of California, were approved by the Legislature and signed by Governor Wilson in 1997; now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly thereof concurring,* That the Legislature does hereby proclaim August 2009 as Valley Fever Awareness Month; and be it further

*Resolved,* That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.